THEOSOPHY

A MAGAZINE DEVOTED TO

THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT, AND THE BROTHERHOOD OF HUMANITY

THE PATH

THE STUDY OF OCCULT SCIENCE AND PHILOSOPHY, AND ARYAN LITERATURE

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INTIMATELY, or rather indissolubly, connected with Karma is the law of rebirth, or of the re-incarnation of the same spiritual individuality in a long, almost interminable, series of personalities. The latter are like the various costumes and characters played by the same actor, with each of which that actor identifies himself and is identified by the public, for the space of a few hours. The inner, or real man, who personates those characters, knows the whole time that he is Hamlet for the brief space of a few acts.

—H. P. BLAVATSKY

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(*c*) The investigation of the unexplained laws of Nature and the psychical powers latent in man.

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A U M

The soul looks directly upon ideas.—PATANJALI

THEOSOPHY

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THE MOLD OF THE PSYCHIC SELF

NATURALLY enough, all human acts, since they originate in *Manas,* tend to embody the dual aspects of the principle of mind. Actions without this duality are either wholly material—or "animal"—or they are of a timeless, spiritual character—without, that is, a focus for individual Karma.

There is a sense, therefore, in which human acts "create" time. Time results from the succession of karmic events. An act which makes an impress upon matter must inevitably change the motion or character of the matter so affected. The response of matter to such impulses is spread out, so to say, according to the nature or level of being represented by the matter involved. This makes cycles, and cycles make time. The intelligence of matter repeats itself in ways which lead to such ideas as that of *pattern,* or *habit.* In fact, it is only by this means that matter or material motion and form assume orderly expression. Pattern and habit are the mark of mind or spirit upon matter.

But for man, pattern and habit have another significance. These stereotyped configurations in time and space do not serve human beings in the same way that they serve material existence. The "spiritual" condition of matter—highly organized in a form—is a bondage rather than a blessing to the human intelligence. While the psychic nature, which is heavily burdened with the qualities of matter, may profit from the pattern of habit, the mind is betrayed by an "order" which belongs only to its lower aspect.

The principle of "order" changes as its application rises from the lowest to the highest degree of intelligence. Who knows, for example, what is "order" for high spiritual intelligence? This is the great diffi-

culty in the transmission of spiritual truth. The Teacher comes, he teaches, leaving behind an influence which is only partly understood. What happens to his teaching inevitably depends upon where his disciples place their sense of reality and order. If their feeling of order is largely psychic, or intellectual, they will "fix" the teaching at this level. They will, that is, define the teachings as being represented by particular relationships of form, which for them stand for "order" in the cosmos. Hence, finally, come the creeds, the rigid sarcophagi of ancient truth. The disciples feel themselves to be absolutely blameless in this regard. Have they not "protected" the truth from misunderstanding or the radical views of rebellious spirits? Have they not given the security of clear and precise definition to the wisdom entrusted to them?

The security, however, is of the *psyche,* and not of the soul.

The spiritual being is without habits, since it is without a gross psyche. The spiritual being knows little or nothing of time, since it has nothing to do with the making of events in matter which produce the intervals of time. How can the spiritual being, then, have a life in embodied existence? Such a life is in fact impossible for a spiritual being, except as the psychic nature has been reduced to nullity as a source of action on any plane but its own.

Here, surely, lies the mystery of the great spiritual beings who have lived on earth. The springs of their actions do not belong to this plane, and for those insensible to this higher motivation, such beings must remain forever incomprehensible—inconceivable and impossible.

"Self-sacrifice" has another meaning than the painful endurance of unpleasant things in behalf of others. Philosophically and metaphysically, it means the breaking of the mold of the psychic self, to make room for the free determinations of the spiritual intelligence. This was the terrible destiny which confronted Arjuna on the battlefield of Kurukshetra. He had to learn to recognize the inappropriateness of the "order" belonging to the psyche, for the purposes of the spiritual man. His entire psychic being cried out in protest. He manifested all the qualities of the psychic under extreme stimulation—fear, elation, petulance, worshipful devotion, and self-righteousness. He stayed in the atmosphere of Krishna until the psyche had been stilled and he grasped, through the agency of a mighty inspiration, what it meant to achieve spiritual sight.

He learned, that is, how it felt to live above memory, without habit, and outside of the cycles of material existence. Forever after, then, for Arjuna, the gamut of psychic experience and perception could have only a second-degree reality. What was done from memory—from custom and by reason of tradition—was only the shell of human activity. This, he learned from Krishna, was the necessary ordering of the psyche—the basis of all collectivist societies or theocratic orders. The alternative to such ordering of the psyche, for all except initiates, would be the wild chaos of ungoverned impulse.

Here, quite plainly, is the distinction to be made between law and government, on the one hand, and the wisdom which pertains to the life of the soul. The one, concerned with the order of the world, deals with the propensities and properties of the psyche, and how these may be engaged, restrained, and in a measure refined. But the other, having, if not an opposite, at least a very different object in view, seeks the disengagement of the psyche, so far as the insight of the inner man is concerned. It looks upon a horizon totally invisible to the psychic man. Hence the "terror" of the personality in the presence of a truly higher inspiration. The personal self foresees its sacrifice, the demolition of all its standards of security. The personality can stand only on the familiar terrain of matter marked with the patterns of the known and the habitual, while the soul sees in those patterns the confinements of a lesser intelligence—masks and blinders for the spiritual eye.

What, then, of the symbolism of the great cycles of nature? It is one of the paradoxes of form that, at every level of being, there is a climactic form destined to transfiguration—the place or point of departure to a higher life. The human body—foreshadowed in the higher animals—is, no doubt, such a form. And here, perhaps, is something of the hidden meaning of geometrical symbolism, of the circle, the spiral, and the cross. There must be both a surface and a transcendent meaning in every cyclic transformation. The new year is thus a repetition, according to patterns laid down in a measureless past, but it is also a beginning which gives the promise of transcendence. Each birth, however humble, is also a bursting out of confinement. Every germ which swells, each seed that casts away its outer garment, is a mute symbol of the great crossing over from matter to spirit which takes place in the wondrous initiation of the heavenly man.

WHY I DO NOT RETURN TO INDIA

[This letter, penned by H. P. Blavatsky, contains declarations of a sort very rarely made by her—statements which can be made only to those who are so firmly grounded in the philosophy that they will not mistake them for "claims," "dogmas," or delusions of grandeur. "Why I Do Not Return to India" (*part* of which was printed in *The Theosophist,* July, 1929) affords the background of meaning against which may be measured various crises of the Theosophical Movement. This article was last reprinted in THEOSOPHY for May, 1947.—Eds. THEOSOPHY.]

TO MY BROTHERS OF ARYAVARTA,

In April, 1890, five years elapsed since I left India.

Great kindness has been shown to me by many of my Hindu brethren at various times since I left; especially this year (1890), when, ill almost to death, I have received from several Indian Branches letters of sympathy, and assurances that they have not forgotten her to whom India and the Hindus have been most of her life far dearer than her own country.

It is, therefore, my duty to explain why I do not return to India and my attitude with regard to the new leaf turned in the history of the T.S. by my being formally placed at the head of the Theosophical Movement in Europe. For it is not solely on account of bad health that I do not return to India. Those who have saved me from death at Adyar, and twice since then, could easily keep me alive there as They do me here. There is a far more serious reason. A line of conduct has been traced for me here, and I have found among the English and Americans what I have so far vainly sought for in India.

In Europe and America, during the last three years, I have met with hundreds of men and women who have the courage to avow their conviction of the real existence of the Masters, and who are working for Theosophy on *Their* lines and under *Their* guidance, given through my humble self.

In India, on the other hand, ever since my departure, the true spirit of devotion to the Masters and the courage to avow it has steadily dwindled away. At Adyar itself, increasing strife and conflict has raged between personalities; uncalled for and utterly undeserved animosity—almost hatred—has been shown towards me by several members of the staff. There seems to have been something strange and un-

canny going on at Adyar, during these last years. No sooner does a European, most Theosophically inclined, most devoted to the Cause, and the personal friend of myself or the President, set his foot in Headquarters, than he becomes forthwith a personal enemy to one or other of us, and what is worse, ends by injuring and deserting the Cause.

Let it be understood at once that I accuse no one. Knowing what I do of the activity of the forces of Kali Yuga, at work to impede and ruin the Theosophical Movement, I do not regard those who have become, one after the other, my enemies—and that without any fault of my own—as I might regard them, were it otherwise.

One of the chief factors in the reawakening of Aryavarta which has been part of the work of the Theosophical Society, was the ideal of Masters. But owing to want of judgment, discretion, and discrimination, and the liberties taken with Their names and *Personalities,* great misconceptions arose concerning Them. I was under the most solemn oath and pledge never to reveal the whole truth to anyone, excepting to those who, like Damodar, had been finally selected and called by Them. All that I was then permitted to reveal was, that there existed somewhere such great men; that some of Them were Hindus; that They were learned as none others in all the ancient wisdom of Gupta Vidya, and had acquired all the Siddhis—not as these are represented in tradition and the "blinds" of ancient writings, but as they are in fact and nature—and also that I was a Chela of one of Them. However, in the imagination of some Hindus, the most wild and ridiculous fancies soon grew up concerning Them. They were referred to as "Mahatmas" and still some too-enthusiastic friends belittled Them with their strange fancy-pictures; our opponents, describing a Mahatma as a full Jivanmukta, urged that, as such, He was debarred from holding any communication whatsoever with persons living in the world. They also maintained that as this is the Kali Yuga, it was impossible that there could be any Mahatmas at all in our age.

These early misconceptions notwithstanding, the idea of the Masters, and belief in Them, has already brought its good fruit in India. Their chief desire was to preserve the true religious and philosophical spirit of ancient India; to defend the Ancient Wisdom contained in its Darshanas and Upanishads against the systematic assaults of the missionaries; and finally to reawaken the dormant ethical and patriotic spirit in those youths in whom it had almost disappeared owing to

college education. Much of this has been achieved by and through the Theosophical Society, in spite of all its mistakes and imperfections.

Had it not been for Theosophy, would India have had her Tukaram Tatya doing now the priceless work he does, and which no one in India ever thought of doing before him? Without the Theosophical Society, would India have ever thought of wrenching from the hands of the learned but unspiritual Orientalists the duty of reviving, translating and editing the Sacred Books of the East, of popularizing and selling them at a far cheaper rate, and at the same time in a far more correct form than had ever been done at Oxford? Would our respected and devoted brother Tukaram Tatya himself have ever thought of doing so, had he not joined the Theosophical Society? Would your political Congress itself have ever been a possibility, without the Theosophical Society? Most important of all, one at least among you has fully benefited by it; and if the Society had never given to India but that one future Adept (Damodar) who has now the prospect of becoming one day a Mahatma, Kali Yuga notwithstanding, that alone would be proof that it was not founded at New York and transplanted to India in vain. Finally, if any one among the three hundred millions of India can demonstrate, proof in hand, that Theosophy, the T.S. or even my humble self, have been the means of doing the slightest harm, either to the country or any Hindu, that the Founders have been guilty of teaching pernicious doctrines, or offering bad advice—then and then only, can it be imputed to me as a crime that I have brought forward the ideal of the Masters and founded the Theosophical Society.

Aye, my good and never-to-be-forgotten Hindu Brothers, the name alone of the holy Masters, which was at one time invoked with prayers for Their blessings, from one end of India to the other—Their name alone has wrought a mighty change for the better in your land. It is not to Colonel Olcott or to myself that you owe anything, but verily to these names, which, but a few years ago, had become a household word in your mouths.

Thus it was that, so long as I remained at Adyar, things went on smoothly enough, because one or other of the Masters was almost constantly present among us, and their spirit ever protected the Theosophical Society from real harm. But in 1884, Colonel Olcott and myself left for a visit to Europe, and while we were away the Padri-Coulomb "thunderbolt" descended. I returned in November, and was taken most

dangerously ill. It was during that time and Colonel Olcott's absence in Burma, that the seeds of all future strifes, and—let me say at once—disintegration of the Theosophical Society, were planted by our enemies. What with the Patterson-Coulomb-Hodgson conspiracy, and the faint-heartedness of the chief Theosophists, that the Society did not then and there collapse should be sufficient proof of how it was protected. Shaken in their belief, the faint-hearted began to ask: "Why, if the Masters are genuine Mahatmas, have They allowed such things to take place, or why have They not used Their powers to destroy this plot or that conspiracy, or even this or that man and woman?" Yet it had been explained numberless times that no Adept of the Right Path will interfere with the just workings of Karma. Not even the greatest Yogis can divert the progress of Karma, or arrest the natural results of actions for more than a short period, and even in that case, these results will only reassert themselves later with even tenfold force, for such is the occult law of Karma and the Nidanas.

Nor again will even the greatest of phenomena aid real spiritual progress. We have each of us to win our Moksha or Nirvana by our own merit, not because a Guru or Deva will help to conceal our shortcomings. There is no merit in having been created an immaculate Deva or in being a God; but there is the eternal bliss of Moksha looming forth for the man who becomes *as a God* and Deity Itself by his own personal exertions. It is the mission of Karma to punish the guilty, and not the duty of any Master. But those who act up to Their teachings and live the life of which They are the best exemplars, will never be abandoned by *Them,* and will always find Their beneficent help whenever needed —whether obviously or invisibly. This is of course addressed to those who have not yet quite lost their faith in Masters; those who have never believed, or have ceased to believe in Them, are welcome to their own opinions. No one, except themselves perhaps some day, will be the losers thereby.

As for myself, who can charge me with having acted like an impostor? with having, for instance, taken one single pie* from any living soul? with having ever asked for money, or with having accepted it, nothwithstanding that I was repeatedly offered large sums? Those who, in spite of this, have chosen to think otherwise, will have to explain what even

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* *Pie, i.e.,* "penny." A *pie* is the smallest Anglo-Indian coin.—Eds.

my traducers of the Padri class and Psychical Research Society have been unable to explain to this day, *viz.,* the motive for such fraud. They will have to explain why, instead of taking and making money, I gave away to the Society every penny I earned by writing for the papers; why at the same time I nearly killed myself with overwork and incessant labour year after year, until my health gave way, so that but for my Master's repeated help, I should have died long ago from the effects of such voluntary hard labour. For the absurd Russian spy theory, if it still finds credit in some idiotic heads, has long ago disappeared, at any rate from the official brains of the Anglo-Indians.

If, I say, at that critical moment, the members of the Society, and especially its leaders at Adyar, Hindu and European, had stood together as one man, firm in their conviction of the reality and power of the Masters, Theosophy would have come out more triumphantly than ever, and none of their fears would have ever been realized, however cunning the legal traps set for me, and whatever mistakes and errors of judgment I, their humble representative, might have made in the executive conduct of the matter.

But the loyalty and courage of the Adyar Authorities, and of the few Europeans who had trusted in the Masters, were not equal to the trial when it came. In spite of my protests, I was hurried away from Headquarters. Ill as I was, almost dying in truth, as the physicians said, yet I protested, and would have battled for Theosophy in India to my last breath, had I found loyal support. But some feared legal entanglements, some the Government, while my best friends believed in the doctors' threats that I must die if I remained in India. So I was sent to Europe to regain my strength, with a promise of speedy return to my beloved Aryavarta.

Well, I left, and immediately intrigues and rumours began. Even at Naples, I already learnt that I was reported to be meditating to start in Europe "a rival Society" and "bust up Adyar" (!!). At this I laughed. Then it was rumoured that I had been *abandoned* by the Masters, been disloyal to Them, done this or the other. None of it had the slightest truth or foundation in fact. Then I was accused of being, at best, a hallucinated *medium,* who had mistaken "spooks" for living Masters; while others declared that the real H. P. Blavatsky was dead—had died through the injudicious use of *Kundalini*—and that the form had been forthwith seized upon by a Dugpa Chela, who was the present H.P.B.

Some again held me to be a witch, a sorceress, who for purposes of her own played the part of a philanthropist and lover of India, while in reality bent upon the destruction of all those who had the misfortune to be *psychologised* by me. In fact, the powers of psychology attributed to me by my enemies, whenever a fact or a "phenomenon" could not be explained away, are so great that they alone would have made of me a most remarkable Adept—independently of any Masters or Mahatmas. In short, up to 1886, when the S.P.R. Report was published and this soap-bubble burst over our heads, it was one long series of false charges, every mail bringing something new. I will name no one; nor does it matter who said a thing and who repeated it. One thing is certain: with the exception of Colonel Olcott, everyone seemed to banish the Masters from their thoughts and Their spirit from Adyar. Every imaginable incongruity was connected with these holy names, and I alone was held responsible for every disagreeable event that took place, every mistake made. In a letter received from Damodar in 1886, he notified me that the Masters' influence was becoming with every day weaker at Adyar; that They were daily represented as less than "second-rate Yogis," totally denied by some, while even those who believed in, and had remained loyal to Them, feared even to pronounce Their names. Finally, he urged me very strongly to return, saying that of course the Masters would see that my health should not suffer from it. I wrote to that effect to Colonel Olcott, imploring him to let me return, and promising that I would live at Pondicherry, if needed, should my presence not be desirable at Adyar. To this I received the ridiculous answer that no sooner should I return, than I should be sent to the Andaman Islands as a Russian spy, which of course Colonel Olcott subsequently found out to be absolutely untrue. The readiness with which such a futile pretext for keeping me from Adyar was seized upon, shows in clear colours the ingratitude of those to whom I had given my life and health. Nay more, urged on, as I understood, by the Executive Council, under the entirely absurd pretext that, in case of my death, my heirs might claim a share in the Adyar property, the President sent me a legal paper to sign, by which I formally renounced any right to the Headquarters or even to live there without the Council's permission. This, although I had spent several thousand rupees of my own private money, and had devoted my share of the profits of *The Theosophist* to the purchase of the house and its furniture. Neverthe-

less I signed the renunciation without one word of protest. I saw I was not wanted, and remained in Europe in spite of my ardent desire to return to India. How could I do otherwise than feel that all my labours had been rewarded with ingratitude, when my most urgent wishes to return were met with flimsy excuses and answers inspired by those who were hostile to me?

The result of this is too apparent. You know too well the state of affairs in India for me to dwell longer upon details. In a word, since my departure, not only has the activity of the movement there gradually slackened, but those for whom I had the deepest affections, regarding them as a mother would her own sons, have turned against me. While in the West, no sooner had I accepted the invitation to come to London, than I found people—the S.P.R. Report and wild suspicion and hypotheses rampant in every direction notwithstanding—to believe in the truth of the great Cause I have struggled for, and in my own *bona fides.*

Acting under the Master's orders I began a new movement in the West on the original lines; I founded *Lucifer,* and the Lodge which bears my name. Recognizing the splendid work done at Adyar by Colonel Olcott and others to carry out the second of the three objects of the T.S., *viz.,* to promote the study of Oriental Literature, I was determined to carry out here the two others. All know with what success this has been attended. Twice Colonel Olcott was asked to come over, and then I learned that I was once more wanted in India—at any rate by some. But the invitation came too late; neither would my doctor permit it, nor can I, if I would be true to my life-pledge and vows, now live at the Headquarters from which the Masters and Their spirit are virtually banished. The presence of Their portraits will not help; They are a dead letter. The truth is that I can never return to India in any other capacity than as Their faithful agent. And as, unless They appear among the Council *in propria persona* (which They will certainly never do now), no advice of mine on occult lines seems likely to be accepted, as the fact of my relations with the Masters is doubted, even totally denied by some; and I myself having no right to the Headquarters, what reason is there, therefore, for me to live at Adyar?

The fact is this: In my position, half-measures are worse than none. People have either to believe entirely in me, or to *honestly* disbelieve. No one, no Theosophist, is compelled to believe, but it is worse than

useless for people to ask me to help them, if they do not believe in me. Here in Europe and America are many who have never flinched in their devotion to Theosophy; consequently the spread of Theosophy and of the T.S. in the West, during the last three years, has been extraordinary. The chief reason for this is that I was enabled and encouraged by the devotion of an ever-increasing number of members to the Cause and to Those who guide it, to establish an Esoteric Section, in which I can teach something of what I have learned to those who have confidence in me, and who prove this confidence by their disinterested work for Theosophy and the T.S. For the future, then, it is my intention to devote my life and energy to the E.S., and to the teaching of those whose confidence I retain. It is useless that I should use the little time I have before me to justify myself before those who do not feel sure about the real existence of the Masters, only because, misunderstanding me, it therefore suits them to suspect me.

And let me say at once, to avoid misconception, that my only reason for accepting the exoteric direction of European affairs, was to save those who really have Theosophy at heart and work for it and the Society, from being hampered by those who not only do not care for Theosophy, as laid out by the Masters, but are entirely working against both, endeavoring to undermine and counteract the influence of the good work done, both by open denial of the existence of the Masters, by declared and bitter hostility to myself, and also by joining forces with the most desperate enemies of our Society.

Half-measures, I repeat, are no longer possible. Either I have stated the truth as I know it about the Masters, and teach what I have been taught by them, or I have invented both Them and the Esoteric Philosophy. There are those among the Esotericists of the inner group who say that if I have done the latter, then I must myself be a "Master." However it may be, there is no alternative to this dilemma.

The only claim, therefore, which India could ever have upon me would be strong only in proportion to the activity of the Fellows there for Theosophy and their loyalty to the Masters. You should not need my presence among you to convince you of the truth of Theosophy, any more than your American brothers need it. A conviction that wanes when any particular personality is absent is no conviction at all. Know, moreover, that any further proof and teaching I can give only to the Esoteric Section, and this for the following reason: its members are the

only ones whom I have the right to expel for open disloyalty to their pledge (*not to me,* H.P.B., but to their *Higher Self* and the *Mahatmic aspect of the Masters*), a privilege I cannot exercise with F.T.S.'s at large, yet one which is the only means of cutting off a diseased limb from the healthy body of the Tree, and thus save it from infection. I can care only for those who cannot be swayed by every breath of calumny, and every sneer, suspicion, or criticism, whomsoever it may emanate from.

Thenceforth let it be clearly understood that the rest of my life is devoted only to those who believe in the Masters, and are willing to work for Theosophy as They understand it, and for the T.S. on the lines upon which They originally established it.

If, then, my Hindu brothers really and earnestly desire to bring about the regeneration of India, if they wish to ever bring back the days when the Masters, in the ages of India's ancient glory, came freely among them, guiding and teaching the peoples; then let them cast aside all fear and hesitation, and turn a new leaf in the history of the Theosophical Movement. Let them bravely rally around the President-Founder, whether I am in India or not, as around those few true Theosophists who have remained loyal throughout, and bid defiance to all calumniators and ambitious malcontents—both without and within the Theosophical Society.

CALUMNY

Calumny! You don't really know what you are disdaining when you disdain it. I have seen persons of the utmost probity laid low by it, or nearly so. Believe me, there is no false report however crude, no abomination, no absurd falsehood, which idlers cannot, if they take the trouble, make universally believed. First of all, they circulate a faint rumour which skims the surface of the ground like a swallow just before a storm, pianissimo and murmurous, so that it seems to pass without leaving a trace; but really, in its passage, it has implanted its poisonous germs. Some ear has heard it, some mouth repeats it, and piano, piano, it reaches other ears. The mischief has been done. It sprouts like a mushroom, spreads like a swelling wave, rinforzando as it moves from one to another, until it becomes the very devil; so that, all of a sudden, who can tell how, the calumny has taken shape, is enlarging, is growing steadily, under all men's eyes.

—STEFAN ZWEIG

CONVERSATIONS ON OCCULTISM

I: The Kali Yuga—The Present Age

STUDENT.—I am very much puzzled about the present age. Some theosophists seem to abhor it as if wishing to be taken away from it altogether, inveighing against modern inventions such as the telegraph, railways, machinery, and the like, and bewailing the disappearance of former civilizations. Others take a different view, insisting that this is a better time than any other, and hailing modern methods as the best. Tell me, please, which of these is right, or, if both are wrong, what ought we to know about the age we live in?

Sage.—The teachers of Truth know all about this age. But they do not mistake the present century for the whole cycle. The older times of European history, for example, when might was right and when darkness prevailed over Western nations, was as much a part of this age, from the standpoint of the Masters, as is the present hour, for the Yuga—to use a Sanskrit word—in which we are now had begun many thousands of years before. And during that period of European darkness, although this Yuga had already begun, there was much light, learning, and civilization in India and China. The meaning of the words "present age" must therefore be extended over a far greater period than is at present assigned. In fact, modern science has reached no definite conclusion yet as to what should properly be called "an age," and the truth of the Eastern doctrine is denied. Hence we find writers speaking of the "Golden Age," the "Iron Age," and so on, whereas they are only parts of the real age that began so far back that modern archæologists deny it altogether.

Student.—What is the Sanskrit name for this age, and what is its meaning?

Sage.—The Sanskrit is "Kali," which added to Yuga gives us "Kali-Yuga." The meaning of it is "Dark Age." Its approach was known to the ancients, its characteristics are described in the Indian poem "The Mahabharata." As I said that it takes in an immense period of the glorious part of Indian history, there is no chance for anyone to be jeal-

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Note.—This article, the first of a series, was originally printed by Wm. Q. Judge in the *Path* for April, 1888. It was last reprinted in Theosophy for November, 1948.

ous and to say that we are comparing the present hour with that wonderful division of Indian development.

Student.—What are the characteristics to which you refer, by which *Kali-Yuga* may be known?

Sage.—As its name implies, darkness is the chief. This of course is not deducible by comparing to-day with 800 A.D., for this would be no comparison at all. The present century is certainly ahead of the middle ages, but as compared with the preceding Yuga it is dark. To the Occultist, material advancement is not of the quality of light, and he finds no proof of progress in merely mechanical contrivances that give comfort to a few of the human family while the many are in misery. For the darkness he would have to point but to one nation, even the great American Republic. Here he sees a mere extension of the habits and life of the Europe from which it sprang; here a great experiment with entirely new conditions and material was tried; here for many years very little poverty was known; but here to-day there is as much grinding poverty as anywhere, and as large a criminal class with corresponding prisons as in Europe, and more than in India. Again, the great thirst for riches and material betterment, while spiritual life is to a great extent ignored, is regarded by us as darkness. The great conflict already begun between the wealthy classes and the poorer is a sign of darkness. Were spiritual light prevalent, the rich and the poor would still be with us, for Karma cannot be blotted out, but the poor would know how to accept their lot and the rich how to improve the poor; now, on the contrary, the rich wonder why the poor do not go to the poorhouse, meanwhile seeking in the laws for cures for strikes and socialism, and the poor continually growl at fate and their supposed oppressors. All this is of the quality of spiritual darkness.

Student.—Is it wise to inquire as to the periods when the cycle changes, and to speculate on the great astronomical or other changes that herald a turn?

Sage.—It is not. There is an old saying that the gods are jealous about these things, not wishing mortals to know them. We may analyze the age, but it is better not to attempt to fix the hour of a change of cycle. Besides that, you will be unable to settle it, because a cycle does not begin on a day or year clear of any other cycle; they interblend, so that, although the wheel of one period is still turning, the initial point of another has already arrived.

Student.—Are these some of the reasons why Mr. Sinnett was not given certain definite periods of years about which he asked?

Sage.—Yes.

Student.—Has the age in which one lives any effect on the student; and what is it?

Sage.—It has effect on every one, but the student after passing along in his development feels the effect more than the ordinary man. Were it otherwise, the sincere and aspiring students all over the world would advance at once to those heights towards which they strive. It takes a very strong soul to hold back the age's heavy hand, and it is all the more difficult because that influence, being a part of the student's larger life, is not so well understood by him. It operates in the same way as a structural defect in a vessel. All the inner as well as the outer fibre of the man is the result of the long centuries of earthly lives lived here by his ancestors. These sow seeds of thought and physical tendencies in a way that you cannot comprehend. All these tendencies affect him. Many powers once possessed are hidden so deep as to be unseen, and he struggles against obstacles constructed ages ago. Further yet are the peculiar alterations brought about in the astral world. It, being at once a photographic plate, so to say, and also a reflector, has become the keeper of the mistakes of ages past which it continually reflects upon us from a plane to which most of us are strangers. In that sense therefore, free as we suppose ourselves, we are walking about completely hypnotized by the past, acting blindly under the suggestions thus cast upon us.

Student.—Was that why Jesus said, "Father, forgive them, *for they know not what they do?*"

Sage.—That was one meaning. In one aspect they acted blindly, impelled by the age, thinking they were right.

Regarding these astral alterations, you will remember how in the time of Julian the seers reported that they could see the gods, but they were decaying, some headless, others flaccid, others minus limbs, and all appearing weak. The reverence for these ideals was departing, and their astral pictures had already begun to fade.

Student.—What mitigation is there about this age? Is there nothing at all to relieve the picture?

Sage.—There is one thing peculiar to the present *Kali-Yuga* that may be used by the Student. All causes now bring about their effects much more rapidly than in any other or better age. A sincere lover of

the race can accomplish more in three incarnations under Kali-Yuga's reign than he could in a much greater number in any other age. Thus by bearing all the manifold troubles of this Age and steadily triumphing, the object of his efforts will be more quickly realized, for, while the obstacles seem great, the powers to be invoked can be reached more quickly.

Student.—Even if this is, spiritually considered, a Dark Age, is it not in part redeemed by the increasing triumphs of mind over matter, and by the effects of science in mitigating human ills, such as the causes of disease itself, cruelty, intolerance, bad laws, etc.?

Sage.—Yes, these are mitigations of the darkness in just the same way that lamp gives some light at night but does not restore daylight. In this age there are great triumphs of science, but they are nearly all directed to *effects* and do not take away the *causes* of the evils. Great strides have been made in the arts and in cure of diseases, but in the future, as the flower of our civilization unfolds, new diseases will arise and more strange disorders will be known, springing from causes that lie deep in the minds of men and which can only be eradicated by spiritual living.

Student.—Admitting all you say, are not we, as Theosophists, to welcome every discovery of truth in any field, especially such truth as lessens suffering or enlarges the moral sense?

Sage.—That is our duty. All truths discovered must be parts of the one Absolute Truth, and so much added to the sum of our outer knowledge. There will always be a large number of men who seek for these parts of truth, and others who try to alleviate present human misery.

They each do a great and appointed work that no true Theosophist should ignore. And it is also the duty of the latter to make similar efforts when possible, for Theosophy is a dead thing if it is not turned into the life. At the same time, no one of us may be the judge of just how much or how little our brother is doing in that direction. If he does all that he can and knows how to do, he does his whole present duty.

Student.—I fear that a hostile attitude by Occult teachers towards the learning and philanthropy of the time may arouse prejudice against Theosophy and Occultism, and needlessly impede the spread of Truth. May it not be so?

Sage.—The real Occult Teachers have no hostile attitude toward

these things. If some persons, who like theosophy and try to spread it, take such a position, they do not thereby alter the one assumed by the real Teachers who work with all classes of men and use every possible instrument for good. But at the same time we have found that an excess of the technical and special knowledge of the day very often acts to prevent men from apprehending the truth.

Student.—Are there any causes, other than the spread of Theosophy, which may operate to reverse the present drift towards materialism?

Sage.—The spread of the knowledge of the laws of Karma and Reincarnation and of a belief in the absolute spiritual unity of all beings will alone prevent this drift. The cycle must, however, run its course, and until that is ended all beneficial causes will of necessity act slowly and not to the extent they would in a brighter age. As each student *lives* a better life and by his example imprints upon the astral light the picture of a higher aspiration acted in the world, he *thus aids souls of advanced development to descend from other spheres* where the cycles are so dark that they can no longer stay there.

Student.—Accept my thanks for your instruction.

Sage.—May you reach the terrace of enlightenment.

Transformation

H. P. Blavatsky, being a genuine occultist, had to take the mind of the race as she found it. Her writings are not for the bigoted, the dogmatic, the contentious, or the narrow-minded. But no more are they for the superficial, the lazy, the shallow-minded. If any of these conditions exist in the mind of the theosophical inquirer or student, they have to be overcome. No one else can achieve that task for him. In his own attempts to overcome these conditions the student starts on the path of true Occultism: the study of the weaknesses and defects in his own nature, and the means of eradicating them.

"WISDOM"—AND ITS BACKGROUND

AT the opening of her *Key to Theosophy,* H. P. Blavatsky points out that the literal translation of "Theosophy" must be amplified. Theosophy, she says, does not mean "divine wisdom" in the sense of a wisdom beyond man—the supreme knowledge suggested by the word "omniscience" in reference to the Christian deity. In Theosophy, she affirms, is wisdom "*such* as that possessed by the gods," and we may take this to mean an affirmation that *men* may acquire the highest wisdom there is.

The "gods," as the ancients seemed to have known full well, were simply representatives of various degrees of fulfillment in understanding and power. It is the primary Theosophical affirmation that such fulfillment is within the reach of every human being—because he has the capacity to attain to more wisdom than that which he presently possesses.

In every religious tradition there is an implicit assumption that emulation of a Buddha or a Christ supplies the most effective basis for morality. While neither Buddha nor Jesus would have countenanced any such persuasion, it has nonetheless been a dominant belief in Christianity and a sometimes intrusive belief in Buddhism. The Theosophical emphasis is unique in its suggestion that the path to the good life is the path of philosophy. The fundamental principles of the philosophy of Theosophy have a direct bearing upon those attitudes which we consider to be ethical. The implication of the First Proposition is that there is That, in every self-conscious being, capable of reaching beyond any present degree of knowledge, or relative perfection of behavior. As a corollary of this, one may assume that the presence within each human form of "the Higher Self, unsectarian, colorless, sexless, and cosmopolitan," means that the man of perverse beliefs or habits may at any time see beyond them. The Second Proposition of the Secret Doctrine, in its simple emphasis upon the universality of periodicity, suggests that the tides of growth in individual humans bring alternations of obscurity and clarity regarding the purposes of soul. The man of destructive influence is destructive now, not forever, and he becomes a law unto himself in the sense that he and he alone can "manifest" higher capacities as *his* cycle permits.

The Third Proposition, "the pivotal doctrine of the Esoteric philosophy," combines the implications to be derived from the First and Second. For if the aim of evolution be defined as the acquirement of individuality, and if that individuality grows only to the extent that one perceives the *significance* of his interrelationships with other beings, man's destiny involves the disciplines of philosophy. The educative aim in life is not so much to prevent one's self from thinking or doing evil, as commonly classified, but to understand the ingredients of evil and of good, and to see in both good and evil the ties which bind the destiny of one "soul" to that of all others.

Intelligence and Intellect

Intelligence I define as the ability of the individual to solve what for him is a new problem. Nor can we omit to discriminate between intelligence and intellect. The learned man, the university professor, exercises his intelligence almost exclusively within the intellectual sphere. Consequently, he likes to measure intelligence in terms of intellectual activity. It may or may not be true that the highest grades of intelligence are revealed only in the intellectual sphere, but it is important to distinguish one thing from the other and to recognize the possibility that a man or a child may be intelligent without being at all intellectual. . . . I do not believe that universities are any more citadels of intelligence than is Congress or the board of directors of some large corporation. The members of a college faculty are, it is true, guardians of the higher intellectual life. The performance level at which they manifest their intelligence is higher than the performance level of, say, the students whom they teach. But I should look with despair upon my task of instructing college students if I did not think that even the freshman class contained more than one student of greater intelligence than fifty per cent of the college faculty.

—Lightner Witmer

THEOSOPHIC REFLECTIONS

OF the four seasons, surely the one which captivates the imagination and brings hope to the harried traveller is the season of spring, with its gentle zephyrs heralding the approach of the golden summer days. During springtime it is truly a joy to tarry in the open spaces and view with unmitigated thankfulness the superb transformation, the new birth unfolding all around us. And in the exuberance of our gratitude for the superlative beauty of the spring flora, the stirrings of myriads of creatures, the memory of the bleak, grim days of winter is forgotten. Could we have the faintest conception of the intricate operations of the World Mind, engaged in bringing to fruition the radiant spectacle of a May morning, or even the gracious symmetrical beauty of the fragrant lily, doubt would no longer assail the mind, obscuring the vision of a divine intelligence underlying and overshadowing all of nature's manifold activities. No longer, either, would we fear the "grim reaper," for we should then recognize death as deliverer—in that after having toiled all day, we shed the remnants of our sensual desires before entering the devachanic state for a well-earned rest.

By analogy, if not by intuition, it would then dawn on the budding consciousness that even as the outer garments of the earth are renewed periodically, the Eternal Ego, after each period of rest, is attracted under the inflexible Law of Karma to an environment of opportunity. Let us not then decry our station in life, for, depend upon it, it is the best-suited to aid our spiritual growth; and if we apply our best efforts, bereft of selfish motives, as counselled in the *Gita,* we will unquestionably be working for the common good and preparing ourselves for further travelling upon the Path.

To develop the inner faculties of sight, hearing, and speech, it is not necessary to have had the advantage of a formal education. Indeed, one of average learning who has "killed out ambition," yet is able to work as those who are ambitious, one who has awakened to a realization of his intrinsic duty, namely, service to others without thought of personal profit, has a golden opportunity of eventually seeing, if not entering, The Path,—making it possible for a New Birth to have taken place in the course of a single lifetime.

Each Ego, upon donning a physical garment after a rest in the devachanic state, enters the school of life to continue his education. Some may have to stay in the same grade in order to absorb certain lessons not thoroughly mastered in a previous incarnation, while others who applied themselves more competently in the previous life, advance to a higher grade. The earth-life is truly a school in which very few pupils fail, each one pursuing his studies to the end. But advancement or retardation depends solely on individual effort. No favoritism is shown; each student has the choice of gaining laurels if his work has been such as to merit recognition; or he may elect to fritter his energies away in futile activities for a time. The wise pupil, realizing that one grade of the school of life is not an end-in-itself but simply a preparatory course for more advanced instruction, will apply himself to learning the necessary lessons; he will cooperate intelligently with his Teacher, doing a maximum of work in order more speedily "to come of age" and enter into his rightful spiritual heritage. By reading, and especially by *studying,* such works as *The Secret Doctrine* and *The Key to Theosophy,* we learn the laws under which the school of life should be lived, if we wish to advance rapidly. We sense the great law of evolution, under which each individual should labor to be born again into a perfect individual instead of allowing his divine possibilities to lie fallow. We learn that while occupying our rightful place in society, and working in the factory or office, we can project through our thoughts and actions our influence for the good of those with whom we come into daily contact. We learn to maintain our mental equilibrium in this highly geared industrialized age.

In the hustle of this modern age, more than ever before, it would seem that the majority are obsessed with the functions of grasping, by any means whatsoever, the straws of material comfort and security, instead of delving into the inner recesses of the Self. While we should not shirk the physical or mental work allotted to us, to let it engulf all our waking thoughts is to stunt the growth of the most important part of our nature—*Manasic awareness.* When one listens to the average conversation, with its emphasis on the material aspects of life (such as the state of the stock market, "escapism" by foreign travel, plans for entertaining or being entertained—anything, in short, which silences the soundless, obscures the Light emanating from the Self), one is moved to amazement, if not pity, that such stupendous energy should be dissipated on ephemeral activities. We may think it is truly tragic that

so few give any deep thought to the hidden meaning of the apparent preponderance of the trivial in our everyday life, yet when pondering on what we consider to be the uselessness of such efforts, it might be well to ask ourselves why we are studying Theosophy. Is it because we wish to generate "good karma" by keeping ourselves unsullied from the common herd, or because we feel that by non-participation in such infantile activities, we augment the development of our powers and hasten entrance into The Path? Instead of harboring such illusions, it might be well to ask if what we are pleased to term futile practices have not, after all, their rightful place in the scheme of things—as stepping stones, perhaps, from the realm of Maya to that of Reality. To those who have not pondered the meaning of spiritual evolution, it could be that what we *call* trivial or useless activities play a very necessary part in the development of personal karma.

For example, to play the stock market with disastrous results could conceivably teach us the futility of giving thought to the acquisition of wealth. Likewise, to entertain or be entertained offers an outlet for gaining an embryonic "sense of psychology." Foreign travel, in many instances, brings home to the tourist the almost insupportable poverty existing in many lands, from which a desire, if not a determination, may be born to alleviate such ills with material aid. A New Birth could then have taken place, and instead of being content to drift with the material current of the stream, we could find ourselves giving understanding or help to those in need.

We should strive to be "born again" in this incarnation, not alone through our theosophical studies, but also through willingness to serve humanity for the common good.

SENSITIVITY

Our whole life is startlingly moral. There is never an instant's truce between virtue and vice. Goodness is the only investment that never fails. . . . Though the youth at last grows indifferent, the laws of the universe are not indifferent, but are forever on the side of the most sensitive. Listen to every zephyr for some reproof, for it is surely there, and he is unfortunate who does not hear it. We cannot touch a string or move a step but the charming moral transfixes us. Many an irksome noise, go a long way off, is heard as music, a proud sweet satire on the meanness of our lives.

—THOREAU

THE "INVOLVED" ENTITY

One whose fire is burned out is reborn through the tendencies in mind; according to his thoughts he enters life.

—*Prasna Upanishad*

WHEN a man is "forced in upon himself" he faces a curious dilemma. Only sometimes does he realize that he is the Self, "bright, bodiless, and free," the Eternal Pilgrim who has gathered unto himself numberless experiences. As an active center of thought, perception, evaluation, he, as Thinker, can range from past to future, encompassing all as Duration, with himself a center of awareness which gives all experiences meaning. He feels himself to be that deathless, immortal, unchanging One—the Self. Then, again, the personal man takes control, and our late Eternal Pilgrim sees himself as an "involved entity," victim of circumstances of birth, bound by tangled cords to family, race, nation—even a whole humanity, perhaps, with which he feels little sympathy. Then he may question—how has this come about? What can he do about it?

The first step, perhaps, is for him to think of himself in relation to all about him, and the Fundamental Propositions of Theosophy, however stated, help in this:

> It is the Spiritual evolution of the *inner,* immortal man that forms the fundamental tenet in the Occult Sciences. To realize even distantly such a process, the student has to believe (*a*) in the ONE Universal Life, independent of matter (or what Science regards as matter); and (*b*) in the individual intelligences that animate the various manifestations of this Principle. (*S.D.* I, 634.)

> The question is, do those mysterious divisions of time, called Yugas and Kalpas by the Hindus, and so very graphically "cycle," ring or circle, by the Greeks, have any bearing upon, or any direct connection with, human life? Even exoteric philosophy explains that these perpetual circles of time are ever returning on themselves, periodically, and intelligently in Space and Eternity. (*S.D.* I, 637-8.)

> Man has not one principle more than the tiniest insect; he is, however, "the vehicle of a fully developed *Monad,* self-conscious and deliberately following its own line of progress, whereas in the insect, and even the higher animal, the higher triad of principles is absolutely dormant." The original *Monad* has, therefore, locked within it the potentiality of divinity. . . . The human monad or Ego is akin to all below it and heir to all above it, linked by indissoluble bonds to spirit

> and matter, "God" and "Nature." . . . *Mind* is the latent or active potentiality of *Cosmic Ideation,* the essence of every form, the basis of every law, the potency of every principle in the universe. Human thought is the reflection or reproduction in the realm of man's consciousness of these forms, laws, and principles. Hence man senses and apprehends nature just as nature unfolds in him. (THEOSOPHY 31: 536, 538.)

In the periodic return of events, the Ego finds itself drawn to birth again. The ancient teaching is that thoughts of the past bring the Ego back to birth and dictate the circumstances of that birth. Thought, united with desire, forms attractive threads that enmesh man with the whole of life. Spirit and matter are eternal, it is taught, and every thought makes a mental as well as a physical link with the desire in which it is rooted. A thought—a living thing—is born, has its period of endurance, then dies, only to be reborn again, intensified by the companionship of other thoughts. Desire, fulfilled or unfulfilled, usually deludes the Ego, forming ties that bind the soul to birth. The ancient books speak of that time when "all the knots of the heart are untied." This comes when a man's thinking becomes so disciplined that he is no longer deluded by desire.

The task of bringing back the inconstant mind from its wanderings and placing it on the Self is not easy. Yet it can be done, teaches *The Bhagavad-Gita,* "by practice and absence of desire." In the article, "Universal Applications of Doctrine," Mr. Judge indicates that it is little wonder we find it difficult to keep our minds on high themes. A few hours a week spent in thinking on principles can make but little headway against a whole week's energy directed toward frivolity, selfishness, indifference. And again, elsewhere, he says that it must one day be our task to follow after and evaluate every thought that has passed through our minds during the course of a day—no easy thing. This is the work of a philosopher, which each of us must one day strive to be, to consider the nature of our thinking, to energize only those thoughts that pass the test of discrimination.

There are qualities of thinking that particularize men. We categorize people as scientists, business men, artists—recognizing that each has a characteristic stream of thought that places him uniquely. He is identified by the quality of his life's thinking. It is the nature of this thinking that will draw the involved entity back to birth, to circumstances formed from the energy placed in that type of thinking. The

Ego thus finds an entry to life with family, race, nation which exactly suits his needs. It is, in fact, just what he himself desired, although he may not wish to recognize it as such. Men are sometimes born into families where hate seems the attractive bond. Energy previously expended in that direction formed those particular ties. Again and again it has been said, "There is no attachment for what we do not think about," and, conversely, there *is* attachment to the subjects of our thoughts. In this living universe, man weaves the web of his destiny daily with every thought and action. Karma-Nemesis, as Madame Blavatsky points out, has no attributes; it is nations and individuals who give to this principle the role of rewarding angel or vengeful fury.

We look tolerantly, perhaps, at past passions that no longer grip us, without considering that other, newer desires may hold us fast. And it will not be until the involved entity learns detachment that he can be fully "creative." This freedom will not come from a desire to escape incarnation—for this is still being bound by desire. But when the man sees this life in proper perspective as but a portion of past and future —not a separate thing, but a flow, a continuity, and himself as perceiver and thinker, giving meaning to every experience, then he will find himself no longer the "involved entity," but one who is truly "bright, bodiless and free."

The Kinship

The power, beauty, and grace of the wild creature, its perfect harmony in nature the exquisite correspondence between organism, form and faculties, and the environment, with the plasticity and intelligence for the readjustment of the vital machinery, daily, hourly, momentarily, to meet all changes in the conditions, all contingencies; and thus, amidst perpetual mutations and conflict with hostile and destructive forces, to perpetuate a form, a type, a species for thousands and millions of years!—all this was always present to my mind; yet even so it was but a lesser element in the complete feeling. The main thing was the wonderfulness and eternal mystery of life itself; this formative, informing energy—this flame that burns in and shines through the case, the habit, which in lighting another dies, and albeit dying yet endures for ever; and the sense, too, that this flame of life was one, and of my kinship with it in all its appearances, in all organic shapes, however different from the human.

—W. H. Hudson

THAT WHICH IS

THE Intelligence that moves the universe is Fire, and Fire is Intelligence. "Fire is the most perfect and unadulterated reflection, in heaven as on earth, of the One FLAME. It is life and death, the origin and the end of every material thing. It is divine Substance." Fire alone is one, on the plane of the One Reality. On that of manifested hence illusive being, its particles are the fiery lives which live and have their being at the expense of every other life that they consume. Therefore they are named the *Devourers.* Pure Cosmic Fire (without, so to speak, fuel) is Deity in its universality; for cosmic fire, or heat which it calls forth, is every atom of matter in manifested nature. There is not a thing or particle in the universe which does not contain in it latent fire.

Occultism sums up the One Existence thus: "Deity is an arcane, living (or moving) FIRE, and the eternal witnesses to this *unseen Presence* are Light, Heat, Moisture"—this trinity including, and being the cause of, every phenomenon in nature. For all we know, FIRE may have been *pure* Akasha, the first matter of the Magnum Opus of the Creators and "Builders." The *Initial Existence* is . . . a Film for creative or formative purposes. It manifests in seven states, which, with their respective subdivisions, are the forty-nine Fires mentioned in the sacred books. . . . To man, IT gives all that it bestows on all the rest of the manifested units in nature; but develops, furthermore, the reflection of all its forty-nine fires in him. The Fire-philosophers, the Rosicrucians, and the earlier Zoroastrians affirmed that the world was created of fire, the *divine spirit* of which was an omnipotent and omniscient God. Fire is Æther in its purest form, and hence is not regarded as matter, but it is the unity of Æther—the second manifested deity—in its universality. But there are two Fires, and a distinction is made between them in occult teachings. The first, or the purely Formless and invisible Fire concealed in the Central Spiritual Sun, is spoken of as "triple" (metaphysically); while the Fire of the manifested Kosmos is septenary, throughout both the universe and our solar system.

There is a deep philosophy underlying the earliest worship in the world, that of the Sun and of Fire. Of all the elements known to physi-

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NOTE.—Collated from the writings of H. P. Blavatsky.

cal science, fire is the one that has ever eluded definite analysis. "The lighting of a fire by a flame is a great scientific difficulty, yet few people think so." Fire is the most mystic of all the five elements, as also the most divine. To give an explanation of its various meanings on our plane alone, leaving all the other planes entirely out of the question, would be much too arduous, in addition to its being entirely incomprehensible for the vast majority. Fire, in the occult sense, is æther, and æther is born of motion, and motion is the eternal dark, invisible Fire. MOTION is eternal, per se. In the manifested kosmos Motion is the alpha and omega of that which is called electricity, magnetism, sensation—moral and physical; of thought, and even life, on this plane. Thus fire, on *our plane,* is simply the manifestation of motion, or life.

The ancients called it Chaos. Plato and Pythagoras named it the Soul of the World. Alone the students of this Agent, which is the divine breath, can unlock the secrets of psychology and physiology, or cosmical and spiritual phenomena. Fire, in the opinion of the Rosicrucians, who were but the successors of the theurgists, was the source, not only of the material atoms, but also of the Forces which energize them. If the Absolute deity can be referred to as Darkness or the Dark Fire, the light, its first progeny, is truly the first self-conscious God. For what is light in its primordial root but the world-illuminating and life-giving Deity? Light is that which, from an abstraction, has become a reality. No one has ever seen real or Primordial Light: what we see is only its broken rays or reflections, which become denser and less luminous as they descend into form and matter. Fire, therefore, is a term which comprehends ALL. Fire is the invisible Deity, "the Father," and the manifesting light is God "the Son," and also the Sun. Therefore, says the Teaching: "Light, or the *cold* Flame (Chaos) is a cold Fire, a cool Radiance, colourless, formless, devoid of every quality. Motion is the One Eternal *is,* and contains the potentialities of every quality in the manvantaric worlds."

Fire is the father of light, light the parent of heat and air (vital air). Light sets in motion and controls all in nature, from that highest primordial Æther down to the tiniest molecule in space. The one Cosmic element is called figuratively Fire. The expanding of the universe under the breath of Fire is very suggestive in the light of the Fire Mist period of which modern science speaks so much, and knows in reality so little. Great heat breaks up the compound elements and resolves the heavenly

bodies into their primeval one element, explains the Commentary. "Once disintegrated into its primal constituent by getting within the attraction and reach of a focus, or centre of heat (energy), of which many are carried to and fro in space, a body, whether alive or dead will be vaporized and held in 'the bosom of Mother' until Fohat, gathering a few clusters of Cosmic matter (nebulae) will, by giving it an impulse, develop the required heat, and then leave it to follow its own new growth."

All cosmic phenomena were referred to by the Rosicrucians as "animated geometry." Every polar function is only a repetition of primeval polarity, said the Fire-philosophers. For motion begets heat, and æther in motion is heat. When it slackens its motion, then cold is generated, for "cold is æther in a latent condition." When we say that fire is the first of the Elements, it is the first known in the visible universe, the fire that we commonly know. Even on the highest plane of *our* universe, the plane of Globe A or G, fire is in one respect only the fourth (element). *The Secret Doctrine* teaches that in the first round, the globe, having been built by the primitive fire-lives, i.e., formed into a sphere—had no solidity nor qualifications, save a cold brightness, nor form nor colour. It is only toward the end of the first round that it developed one element from which its inorganic, so to say, or simple Essence became now in our round the fire we know throughout the system.

In the ancient philosophy of all times and countries, including our own, Fire has been regarded as a triple principle. As water comprises a visible fluid with invisible gases lurking within, and behind all the spiritual principle of nature which gives them their dynamic energy, so in fire they recognized visible flame; invisible or astral fire—invisible *when inert,* but when active producing heat, light, chemical force, and electricity, the molecular powers; and Spirit. They applied the same rule to each of the elements; and everything evolved from their combinations and correlations, man included, was held by them to be *triune.* Thus every *fire* has a distinct function and meaning in the worlds of the physical and the spiritual. It has, moreover, in its essential nature a corresponding relation to one of the human psychic faculties, besides its well-determined chemical and physical potencies when coming in contact with the *terrestrially* differentiated matter. Science has no speculation on fire *per se;* Occult and ancient religious sciences have. Truly the young Brahmin who graduates in the universities and colleges of

India with the highest honors; who starts in life as an M.A. and LL.B., with a tail initialed from alpha to omega after his name, and a contempt for his national gods proportioned to the honours received in his education in physical sciences; truly he has but to read in the light of the latter, and with an eye to the correlation of physical forces, certain passages in his Puranas, if he would learn how much more his ancestors knew than he will ever know—unless he becomes an occultist.

Let him turn to the allegory of Pururavas and the celestial Gandharvas (cosmically and psychically, aggregate powers and intelligences) who furnished the former with a vessel full of heavenly fire. The *primeval mode of obtaining fire by friction* has its scientific explanation in the Vedas, and is pregnant with meaning for him who reads between the lines. The *Tretagni* (*sacred* triad of fires) obtained by the attrition of sticks made of wood of the Ashwatta tree (the Bo-tree, of Wisdom and Knowledge)—sticks "as many finger-breaths long as there are syllables in the Gayatri" must have a secret meaning, or else the writers of the Vedas and Puranas were no sacred writers but mystifiers. That it has such a meaning the Hindu occultists are a proof, and they alone are able to enlighten Science, as to why and how "the fire, that was primevally *one,* was made threefold (*treta*) in our present Manvantara, by the Son of Ila (Vach), the primeval woman after the Deluge, the wife and daughter of Vaivasvata Manu." The allegory is suggestive, in whatever Purana it may be read and studied.

Just as in old alchemical works the real meaning of the substances and elements is concealed under the most ridiculous metaphors, so are the physical, psychic, and spiritual natures of the Elements (say of Fire) concealed in the Vedas, and especially in the Puranas, under allegories comprehensible only to the Initiates. Had they no meaning, then indeed all those long legends and allegories about the sacredness of the three types of fire, and the forty-nine original fires—personified by the Sons of Daksha's daughters and the Rishis, their husbands, "who with the first son of Brahma and his three descendants constitute the forty-nine fires"—would be idiotic verbiage, and no more. The "living fire" is spoken of in all Hindu books, as also in the Kabalistic works. The Zohar explains it as the "white hidden fire, in the White Head, whose Will causes the fiery fluid to flow in 370 currents in every direction of the universe." It is identical with the "Serpent that runs with 370 leaps" of the Siprah Dzenioota, which, when the "Perfect Man," the Metatron, is

raised, i.e., when the *divine* man indwells in the *animal* man, it, the Serpent, becomes *three spirits,* that is to say, Atma-Buddhi-Manas, in our theosophical phraseology.

We often speak of the Hierarchy of "Flames," of the "Sons of Fire," etc. Sankaracharya, the greatest of the esoteric masters of India, says that fire means a deity which presides over Time (kala). "The Sons of Fire"—because they are the first Beings (in *The Secret Doctrine* they are called "minds") evolved from the primordial Fire. It is taught that the Fire-Devas, the Rudras, and the Kumaras, the "Virgin-Angels" preferred the curse of incarnation and the long cycles of terrestrial existence and rebirths to seeing the misery (even if unconscious) of the beings evolved as shadows out of their Brethren, the "Lunar" gods, through the semi-passive energy of their *too spiritual* Creators. Says the *Catechism,* with regard to the "fires" physical, spiritual, and intellectual, of Man: "It is from the material Worlds that descend they, who fashion physical man at the new Manvantara. They are the inferior lunar Spirits, possessed of a dual body (an astral within an ethereal form), the fashioners and creators of our body of illusion. Into the forms so projected by the lunar spirits (Lha) the two letters (the Monad, called also 'the Double Dragon') descend from the spheres of expectation. But they are like a roof with no walls, nor pillars to rest upon. Man needs *four* flames and *three* fires to become One on earth, and he requires the essence of the forty-nine fires to be perfect. It is those who have deserted the Superior Spheres, the Gods of Will, who complete the Manu of illusion. For the 'Double Dragon' has no hold upon the mere form. It is like the breeze where there is no tree or branch to receive and harbour it. It cannot affect the form where there is no agent of transmission (Manas, 'Mind') and the form knows it not. In the highest worlds, the three are one. . . ." The (four) flames are evanescent and only periodical; the Fires—eternal in their triple Unity.

YOUTH-COMPANIONS ASK— AND ANSWER

IT has often been said from the ULT platform that we could not stand to know of or remember our past life or lives. We constantly find ourselves involved in the complexities of our personal nature which seem extremely baffling and confounding, since we do not know of their ultimate origin or what first impulse initiated their coming into being and becoming a part of our personality. Psychology helps to a great degree, but obviously, as we know from Theosophy, does not go deep enough to uncover any "first causes." Could there not be some value in being able to see past lives, enough to outweigh any possible shocks—providing, of course, that one were able to maintain a true student's attitude toward such a revelation?

In the first place, the assumption that at our stage we would be able to maintain a true student's attitude toward a revelation of past lives is, I believe, an obvious fallacy, in the light of our inability to maintain such an attitude toward our present life. If the present is "baffling and confounding," how baffling and confounding would a view of past lives be, and how able would we be to select "first causes" out of the array of events which such a revelation would portray?

Should not the very fact that we are *involved* in the complexities of our personal nature show us that the cause of our confusion lies in that involvement? The question, then, must be how to become less involved so that we can more intelligently deal with the present, as a start toward uncovering the so-called "first causes." Theosophy gives us a vision of the ultimate First Cause of the evolution of the whole of life and of our part in it. What better way to become less involved in our personal nature than to try to ever widen the circle of our understanding of the purpose of *all* life? The example of the assembly-line worker having to put together the same small, seemingly insignificant parts of a great machine, day after day, seems a good one here. If he sees no further than his own personal task, he must inevitably at some point experience confusion and frustration. But show that man the finished machine, in the building of which his small part is an integral factor, and he will gain an understanding and a sense of purpose impossible without that whole view.

So it is in our personal lives, if we but widen our circle of understanding of what we do day by day, and *why* it is for us to do as our particular function in the whole scheme. We *are* one with the whole of life, but we see ourselves as separate units, and probably the first cause of all our difficulties is in this great heresy of separateness. Essentially, then, is not the Karmic indication of *this* life that we should struggle to overcome separateness by tackling our problems from the point of view of our *relation* to them as well as to all beings? Would not the gradual achievement of a sense of unity unfold, in corresponding degree, the latent power of the Soul to see past, present, and future as One Life? Such is the vision of the man called Adept; such must be the goal of all men.

Certainly there must be value in seeing past lives, but just as certain is it, in the light of Theosophy, that this is a faculty to be earned. Arjuna had *earned* the right to the Divine Vision in the eleventh chapter of the *Bhagavad-Gita.* Even at that, let us remember, Arjuna was terrified by it. Mr. Crosbie gives us sound advice when he says that if things were different, they *would* be different. Lafcadio Hearn in "Within the Circle" describes the effect of his own vision of past lives: "I can say only that no combination of suffering possible to *individual* being could be likened to such pain,—the pain of countless lives interwoven." Here was a rare soul, yet unready, in his own words, to stand the sight of past lives. How can we, then, hope to use intelligently even the smallest revelation until we have built upon the rock-foundation, made up of the strength of knowledge and simple virtues, a perfect house for Mind to dwell in and the Power of Spirit to work through?

Only when we are ready, we may be sure, will kind Nature reveal her mysteries within us—and the way of readiness, we are taught, is to help Nature and work on with Her—each moment, each hour, each day in all the years of our life. "Fortune's favored soldiers" are we, to have earned the *key* of Theosophy, and the duty to use it, in dealing at our present level with our present problems, and thus with right motive to raise the level of achievement of the whole of life. It is not an easy task to apply the principles of Theosophy in daily life, but from the viewpoint of Soul, it is the one task worth doing.

RIGHT AND WRONG

QUESTIONS regarding right and wrong arise in the life of everyone. Sometimes the answers seem to be quite simple, but problems of ethics and morals are seldom easily solved. Perhaps difficulties are encountered from concepts of authority, from questions as to what is the true basis of ethics or from a multiplicity of desires. Even a single desire that has become an obsession obscures the vision of the soul. That desire which is for freedom from desire ceases to be an obsession. Freedom from obsessing desire is an essential for spiritual perception. For the sake of Brotherhood, that kind of freedom becomes a legitimate aspiration of the human soul.

Whatever the cause of a problem may be, or the questions that arise therefrom, answers from incomplete knowledge, partial considerations, or personal bias do not really answer, and lead far astray. Another consideration is that what is good for one may not be so for another. Much depends upon what is being considered, how, and especially why. A question of relativity, for instance, is quite different from one of principle or natural law. Though incidentals do not require the same emphasis as essentials, yet they often assume an appearance of undue importance. At such times there is lack of true perspective. Hence at least a glimpse of fundamental verities underlying the eternal fitness of things is essential for truly evaluating right and wrong. When such glimpses are deepened and expanded into clear vision, the evaluations become more sound and true.

To think of ourselves as brothers to all that lives, and to act upon that principle, can be a tremendous power for good. The whole nature of man is awakened thereby to a higher perspective and a broader view. This helps to banish the great heresy of separateness, the greatest curse of any age.

Every living thing is intelligent. As "all is soul and spirit ever evolving under the rule of law which is inherent in the whole," even the atom has the intelligence to do what it does. This follows from the universality of the principle of Mind. Animals are obviously intelligent, and even choose in their way. The difference between animals and men in this regard lies in man's power to choose self-consciously. He is on a higher rung of the ladder of being. Yet Nature often shows more sense

than man seems to. This is because there are universal *Laws* which prevail everywhere. Also, Nature includes man and living beings of greater Wisdom than mankind generally has yet attained.

True concepts of the Self of all lead to right action. Erroneous concepts precipitate mistakes. They are an inversion of the true. Maya is the great illusion of life that deceives and obscures the real. The principle of reality is impersonal. From a practical point of view, impersonality means freedom from personality. This may seem to have little to do with right and wrong, but is actually the soul of it. No true evaluations can be made without some practical realization of just such principles. Learning to live in the true, a balancing of diversities is seen to be the harmony of the universe.

Considerations of right and wrong confined to others omit a vital factor. That is the one for whom the problems and questions arise. When deliberations exclude a consideration for others, the true perspective is lost. Right and wrong are not things in themselves. They cannot be categorized or labeled as dogmatism would have us believe. Good or evil attend and follow applications or misapplications of principles. They pertain to relationships of all kinds at any time anywhere. Hence the *why* of a question should go to the root of the problem. Motive is highly important. One cannot really do right with a selfish motive. The question of motive, however, has to be answered from within, not from without.

Generally speaking, there are three considerations necessary to the solution of any problem. (1) *What* is the underlying principle? (2) *How* is it to be applied? (3) *Why?*

Anyone who makes a decision does so according to some conscious or unconscious assumption. This may be based either on speculation or on knowledge, on guess-work or on practical experience. The application may be good or bad. Appearances constantly deceive. To see beneath them is the great task. Only Adepts are said to be able to do so truly and completely. What, then, can and should be done? Is there a means of evaluation? Does there exist a criterion of some kind? Is there a truly enlightening approach to any and all problems? This is where Theosophy can and ought to help—not as a creed or dogma, but by the light it has to throw on the principles of things.

Universal Brotherhood, for instance, can be regarded as an underlying principle of all life and a fact in Nature. Or, when not denied

altogether, it may be thought of as no more than a practically unattainable ideal. The whole teaching of Theosophy is to show the folly of this notion by demonstrating the soundness of the principle and the necessity for living accordingly. But concepts of Brotherhood can be so wide of the mark as to actually obscure its practical realization.

To think that the law of Karma, or of cause and effect, often works, but sometimes not, or that there are exceptions, is due to non-realization of the infallible working of the Law. To believe that efforts can be effective though half-hearted, or must conform to the opinions and views of others, also is folly. The opinion of the world is not to be despised, but it may be evaluated more truly in the light of Theosophical knowledge and experience. Right and wrong have nothing to do with creeds, dogmas or conformity, but everything to do with eternal verities and their application in daily life. Men, seeking Reality, give it many names. To see beyond all anthropomorphic conceptions, however, is to realize that reality is nameless.

To be in sympathy with whatever is good and true does not imply or require a personal following. It is rather a constant endeavor to live up to impersonal ideals. It is to give freely whatever is given without a thought of return. This is difficult for the personal man to understand, but is the quintessence of duty and an essential of a spiritual life. No one can be too diligent in that pursuit. It is the way for all together.

The Right to Heresy

Since, in every age, violence renews itself in changed forms, the struggle against it must continually be renewed by those who cling to the things of the spirit. They must never take refuge behind the pretext that at the moment force is too strong for them. For what it is necessary to say cannot be said too often, and truth can never be uttered in vain. Even when the Word is not victorious, it manifests its eternal presence; and one who serves it at such an hour has given glorious proof that no Terror holds sway over a free spirit, but that even in the most cruel of centuries there is still a place for the voice of humaneness.

—Stefan Zweig

WHAT IS THE SOUL?

[The short articles comprising this series are derived from characteristic talks given during the years 1915-35. As often as practicable, the words of the speaker have been used without change, in the hope of conveying some of the force originally imparted to the ideas.]

THEOSOPHY is a teaching in regard to life, and as a teaching is absolutely *sui generis.* Its specific doctrines are comparatively unknown, as unknown in the Orient as in the West. Hence *soul* as used in Theosophy is not generally understood, for the majority of people have only a vague idea of what is meant by the theological classification "body, soul, and spirit," and assume Theosophists are equally vague in their use of the term. This is not the case, as we will attempt to show.

What is the soul from the theosophical standpoint? It is embodied spirit. And what is embodied spirit? It is conditioned consciousness. And what is conditioned consciousness? *We are.*

The best way for us to learn this is by using the powers that are inherent in us; for all of us are able to see, and even a little seeing at first-hand is better than any amount of second-hand description. Using, then, our soul-power of discernment, we can see that Life is in every one of us; it is what we fundamentally are. It is not that we are alive; we *are* Life. It is not that we are a body; our body is only a form of matter. Just so, our consciousness is a *form of life.*

Notice that in defining "soul" it was necessary to use two words. Although *soul* itself is a single term, the soul is embodied spirit. Implicit in that statement is an idea that there is such a condition as spirit or life or consciousness that is *not* embodied—spirit or life or consciousness *not* conditioned. We, however, being conditioned life, are unable at present to form any but the vaguest conceptions of what unconditioned life may be like. The greatest philosopher that the Western world has ever produced, Plato, tried to illustrate this in *The Republic.* He there likened the condition of the human being to a man in a cave with his back to the entrance of the cave, looking inwards against the blank wall at the end. Over his shoulder comes light from outside, and that light makes images of himself and his movements on the wall, and he takes those images to be reality. He takes what he

can see to be *all* there is to see, and he cannot understand that he is anything other than the shadow or the silhouette cast on the wall.

Another great teacher long before Plato likened our existence to that of a man living with the frogs at the bottom of a very deep well. All he could see of space, of sky, of the universe, was just what that little point of light above his head revealed. He therefore interpreted the world by what he saw—the walls of the well, the water that was in it, and the frogs that croaked beside him. Yet, let the man wonder just once where the light comes from, what *more* there might be to see, and he may leave his cave or climb out of his well, and find an entirely new "reality" before him.

So it can be seen that one single flash of direct perception is worth all the books ever written, all the sermons ever preached by all the theologians and doctrinaires under heaven. For the soul is the perceiver; is assuredly vision itself; and it looks directly upon ideas. The soul itself is unmodified, unconditioned, unembodied. Yet the moment that the soul looks on ideas, it becomes identified with the idea on which it looks. So we can see that the soul has two powers; the power of expansion and the power of identification. It has the power of identification with any part of life, with any experience in any part of life, and during the period of that identification the soul is exactly like the man in Plato's *Republic* or the man at the bottom of the well.

We know that we are constantly using the expression that a man goes by what he sees. This is in itself evidence of what we really are. If we were not perceivers, how could we go by what we see? Yet all that any soul can see is an image. Whether that is a true image of the soul or a caricature of the soul makes no difference. All that we can ever see is something projected outside ourselves.

There is, however, another kind of traveling—the soul-power of expansion: we can also go by what we know and by what we learn. Many times we do not go by what we see; we go by what we know. If we stand on the bank of a still pond and go by what we see, there is no reason why we should not follow Christ's example and start out to walk on the water, for it looks just the same as the rock on which we are standing. But if we *do* go by what we see, and step off into the water, and are unable to adjust ourselves to the different substance into which we have entered, we are out of luck; and we *know* better than to try it!

Now, what is unconditioned consciousness? It is consciousness clothed in knowledge. That was once our own condition. We lived, we dwelt, we moved, we acted, not on the basis of our likes and dislikes, nor on the basis of what we saw, but of what we *knew.* We knew what we were, and did not have to struggle to maintain our "position." It should be evident to us that there is something unnatural in our existence *here* as human beings. We have to struggle constantly to maintain our existence here. The fact that we have to struggle so shows that this is not our natural home, is not our natural existence. The chemical elements do not have to struggle to maintain their existence. Hydrogen is hydrogen no matter what you do with it or what combinations it may be in or what God you pray to, to change it into oxygen. This is evidence that existence in this world is native to certain forms or conditions of life; it is natural to them; they can exist here for untold millions of years without difficulty or trouble of any kind. The chemical elements do not need to struggle for their existence; their "knowledge" is sufficient for the task.

As souls, we too have had an existence which we did not have to struggle to maintain. We had an existence before there was time; we had an existence before there was space; we had an existence before there was any matter. *We have such an existence right now;* but unfortunately we do not know it because, though we are perceivers with the power to see, we dwell in darkness—the darkness of life which is not aware that it is Life. Finally we may come to learn that it is not the maintenance of life which awakens spiritual energy, but the transcendence of the patterns of life we presently know. But the awareness of the possibility of transcendence—that, too, lies within, a light which may be dimmed, but never extinguished.

Soul, then, is that aspect of ourselves which *is* aware that it is Life. Soul is the Perceiver, not any of his perceptions; soul is the Experiencer, not any of his enjoyment or suffering. Soul is That in us which "*knows,* for it is knowledge; it is the Man that was, that is, and will be, for whom the hour shall never strike."

ON THE LOOKOUT

A Common Language for Theosophists

For the better part of the past decade, students who have perused a number of publications expressing the viewpoints of variously named Theosophical groups have been encouraged to feel that constructive transitions are taking place. Present movements towards a unification of all theosophical bodies, while perhaps neither necessary nor practical, nevertheless originate in a broadening of viewpoint, a lessening of those sectarian tendencies which H. P. Blavatsky found it necessary to so stringently oppose during the last years of her life.

Perhaps it is simply that the lessons of past theosophical history have become plain to read, or because a genuine impulsion toward universal brotherhood—the keynote of the original Society—has been gradually finding momentum. In any case, Theosophists, wherever assembled, appear to be much less concerned with the relative status of various Theosophic personages, and more concerned with the basic philosophy enunciated in H. P. Blavatsky's *Key to Theosophy.*

In the Theosophical Society, a world-wide organization claiming an impressive membership roster, there is a clearly evident attempt to revitalize the ethical and philosophical meaning of the original Founder's work. Illustrative of this temper are the words of Mr. N. Sri Ram, President of the T.S., in his annual addresses to international conventions of that body. On the occasion of the 72nd Convention of the T.S. Sri Ram spoke in terms beyond all partisanship: "We cannot give the beauty and wisdom of Theosophy to the world until we have experienced it in our own hearts. We can help the world only by expressing in our lives the spirit of that Brotherhood for which the Society stands."

"Inwardly Growing Comprehension"

To remind theosophical students that they have no exclusive claims to the truths contained in the work of Theosophical Messengers, Sri Ram remarked during his 1956 address:

> The truth which we call Theosophy is a truth which underlies, overshadows and synthesizes all presentations, as our great Founder, H.P.B., has so magnificently attempted to prove in her *Secret Doctrine.* As Theosophists we owe a duty to humanity as well as to the nation

with which we happen to have a special tie, and while we may delight in and try to share the beauties of any particular religion or presentation with which we happen to be familiar, we must also in some measure be open to the influence of and render homage to the truth which is in others. It is not that everyone should study everything, which is neither possible nor necessary, but it is a matter of inwardly growing those wings of comprehension which will eventually envelop all life and all truth. The famous words, "The world is my country," have to-day a living significance which the phrase did not possess, except to the few, in any previous age.

TRUTH BEYOND ORGANIZATION

In 1958, while discussing the distinctions between organizational program and progress in philosophy, Sri Ram enunciated some basic Theosophic principles:

In the face of the need that obviously exists for some central change from which all other desirable changes will ensue, should there not be one organization such as the Theosophical Society, including men and women of every religion, nationality and race, of every temperament, the simple as well as the learned, to stand, however inadequately, for this aim? But because the aim is a change in the individual, the organization as such, apart from its members, can play only an accessory part. Just as when we say Beauty, the call is to the individual to respond to that beauty, so does Wisdom, though it can be applied to corporate affairs, call first for an individual awakening. A change that involves one's whole being cannot be brought about by methods such as are used to acquire mere learning; it has to begin at a deeper level than that at which we make our mental dispositions. There has to be released in the individual a current that creating for itself an open field operates to bring about a closer relation between him and all else that exists. We put what we know or feel to be the truth in such words as are available; but the words by themselves or any verbal understanding makes only one layer among many other layers that constitute those settled parts of ourselves from which we habitually act.

INDIVIDUAL RESPONSIBLE

The crucial obligation of the Theosophist, as Sri Ram explains, is to cut through partisan barriers within the structure of his own personal nature:

What is needed to guide us to a living appreciation of Truth, which is a truth about ourselves and life in general, is an inward approach that keeps us open to everything about us, including our fellowmen, an openness to understand and sympathize, which is true Brotherhood.

Theosophy is in its outer form a synthesis of all that is true in any philosophy, religion or science, whether of the past or the present. But it is a truth of which the living essence has to be discovered in oneself. The Society exists to propagate the truth that can be stated in various forms; but first there must be a reflection of the truth to be realized in our own lives. The success of our work as a Society will depend not merely on the amount of propaganda we put out, the number of meetings and lectures at which we thresh out problems, but upon there being members in every part of the world who are wells of understanding, who are nuclei for the spiritual expressions of the movement and eager to do what is required of them individually.

No Theosophy Without Philosophy

Shortly before his death on Aug. 20 of this year, Mr. B. P. Wadia, President of the Indian Institute of World Culture and an indefatigable worker for United Lodges of Theosophists in India, delivered an address before the Institute wherein a further clarification of theosophic principle emerges:

Philosophically it is taught by all mystics that Unity binds all souls into one grand mosaic. The test for every human soul consists in his understanding and appreciation of the fact that the human kingdom should be, must be, regarded as a family. Behind and underlying diversity there is Unity. There are feud and war between us and others, individually and nationally, because there is strife between our own two natures—the animal and the human. Our test therefore lies in destroying in ourselves the immorality which springs from egotism and in acquiring the spirit which sees the Divine at work everywhere. The Beautiful is hidden in the ugly; the True is at the core of every untruth; the Good ensouls the Evil. Satan is the Archangel and His lust carries within it God's Love; His Wrath, God's Mercy; His Greed, God's urge to Righteousness. We are so saturated with our small sins and petty crimes that we fail to see that our greatest sin, our ghastliest crime, is to live and labour each as a unit separated from others.

Brotherhood More Than Sentiment

The work of Theosophy, for the individual, is pre-eminently a work of study. Without a study of the inner constitution of man and of nature, one may *desire* to manifest universal tolerance and a growing comprehension of diverse human nature, yet never discover the path for ascent. As Mr. Wadia put it:

We have already spoken of Universal Brotherhood. To love our neighbors, whatever their race or religion, whatever their social status, whatever their customs, habits and manners—this represents the high-

est form of human morality. We must develop that morality, that moral outlook and for this we need two principles. We need the spirit of real tolerance and we can unfold that tolerance, leading to appreciation, by a proper comparative study of our brethren's religion, customs and habits, manners and points of view. But for such a study to bring us practical benefit we have to look at the forces and faculties which unite man to man. Every human body is different from every other human body, and yet all human bodies are similar in as much as all of us have two eyes, two ears, two hands, two feet and one tongue. The constitution of all human beings is also similar. Each is a Soul and has a mind nature, an emotional nature and a bodily nature. We cannot love our fellow men with understanding without adequate knowledge of the complete constitution of the human being.

RETURN OF ICE AGE PREDICTED

An article by Betty Friedan, "The Coming Ice Age" (*Harper's* for September), sums up the theories and experiments which have occupied Maurice Ewing, director of Columbia University's Lamont Geological Observatory, and William Donn, geologist-meteorologist, for the past five years. These two scientists, says Miss Friedan, "believe they have finally found the explanation for the giant glaciers, which four times during the past million years have advanced and retreated over the earth." Miss Friedan continues:

> If they are right, the world is now heading into another Ice Age. It will come not as sudden catastrophe, but as the inevitable culmination of a process that has already begun in northern oceans.

READING THE SIGNS

> As Ewing and Donn read the evidence, an Ice Age will result from a slow warming and rising of the ocean that is now taking place. They believe that this ocean flood—which may submerge large coastal areas of the eastern United States and western Europe—is going to melt the ice sheet which has covered the Arctic Ocean through all recorded history. Calculations based on the independent observations of other scientists indicate this melting could begin within roughly one hundred years.
>
> It is this melting of Arctic ice which Ewing and Donn believe will set off another Ice Age on earth. They predict that it will cause great snows to fall in the north—perennial unmelting snows which the world has not seen since the last Ice Age thousands of years ago. These snows will make the Arctic glaciers grow again, until their towering height forces them forward. The advance south will be slow, but if it follows the route of previous ice ages, it will encase in ice large parts of North

America and Europe. It would, of course, take many centuries for that wall of ice to reach New York and Chicago, London and Paris. But its coming is an inevitable consequence of the cycle which Ewing and Donn believe is now taking place.

Eleven Thousand Years Ago

A discovery crucial to the emerging theory of Ewing and Donn was made at Lamont when specimens of sediment brought up by deep-sea corers were studied. (A corer is a "device which can bring up primeval sediment undisturbed through as much as 4,000 fathoms of water—24,000 feet—just as it was deposited thousands of years ago.") Examination of the fossil remains showed that "at a certain time the ocean suddenly changed from cold to warm, [and] measurements of radiocarbon showed that this sudden warming took place throughout the length and breadth of the vast Atlantic Ocean—11,000 years ago." For a year or so, Ewing and Donn kept asking themselves: "What happened 11,000 years ago to heat the ocean? What could change the climate of the whole ocean so abruptly?"

It would be impossible, we think, for a Theosophist to consider these questions without at least "wondering" if the submersion of a large land mass such as the last vestige of the Atlantean continent might not have been a contributing factor.

Creative Imagination at Work

Ewing and Donn, of course, have a different theory to account for the sudden warming of the Atlantic. It occurred to them when they wondered "what would happen if the ice went out of the Arctic Ocean as it does in the Yukon or Delaware?" In their words:

> Well, we figured, the Arctic Ocean would get warmer. Because water would flow more freely between it and the Atlantic, dissipating the cold. And of course, the Atlantic Ocean would get colder. But wait a minute . . . we saw it simultaneously. If the Arctic Ocean were open water, warmed by the Atlantic, warmer than the land around it, water would evaporate and fall as snow on the land. More snow on Greenland and northern Canada would make glaciers grow. Glaciers don't grow now because there is no open water in the Arctic to provide the moisture for snow.

A Hunch is Born

> And suddenly we had the startling hunch that the Arctic Ocean *was open* during the Ice Age. And that it froze over only 11,000 years ago.

> It was this freezing over of the Arctic Ocean which so suddenly warmed the Atlantic—and ended the Ice Age. . . . The more we thought about it, the more it added up. It explained so many things that have always puzzled us.
>
> For once you accept the radical idea that the Arctic was a warm open ocean at the time of the great continental glaciers, you can reconstruct a completely different weather pattern from the one we know today. As we worked it out, we could see a startling chain of cause and effect between the oceans and the glaciers themselves. We could see how the oceans would work as an actual "thermostat" to keep the earth alternating between glacial ice ages and interglacial periods such as today.

Corroboration of Ancient Teaching

Donn's construction of a weather map of the world with an open Arctic Ocean corroborates the ancient teachings of a climate similar to that of the Hyperborean Continent, which, according to H.P.B., "knew no winter in those early days." Ewing and Donn also learned that anthropologists have discovered traces of an ancient civilization around the Arctic, and that "while anthropologists are still uncertain as to how and when man first *came* to America they are pretty sure he suddenly started migrating south, in an explosive wave, about 11,000 years ago." Then, "with the melting of the Arctic ice sheet, the rise in sea level will stop." When this happens, says Miss Friedan:

> Instead of adding water to the sea, the glaciers will begin taking it out. For a long time after the ocean flood subsides, the only effect the Ice Age will have on us down here will be more rain. The new Arctic moisture that falls as snow on the glaciers will increase both rain and snow here, swelling rivers and watering deserts. Then, gradually, our weather will cool. Icy winds will blow from the advancing glaciers; the great snows will fall farther and farther south. In several thousand years a two-mile ice sheet may cover the United States and Europe. If man finds no way to switch the glacial thermostat, there may well be a real estate boom in the Sahara.

Or on the new sixth continent! Who knows?

Tie-in with Hyperborean Continent

The ancient teachings about the Hyperborean Continent and the shifting of the pole (which Ewing and Donn, also, assert was at one time "in the middle of the Pacific") tie in with the Ewing and Donn theory that the Arctic Ocean was once open water. Several passages in *The Secret Doctrine* bear on this subject:

> The "Hyperborean" will be the name chosen for the Second Continent, the land which stretched out its promontories southward and westward from the North Pole to receive the Second Race. . . . The land of the Hyperboreans, the country that extended beyond Boreas, the frozen-hearted god of snows and hurricanes . . . was neither an ideal country . . . nor yet a land in the neighbourhood of Scythia and the Danube. It was a real Continent, a *bona-fide* land which knew no winter in those early days. . . . (*S.D.* II, 7.)

Whence the Tradition?

How, H.P.B. asks, was it that the Greeks knew, even in the days of Homer, of such a land as the Hyperborean, [since] "in their day, and for ages previously, Greenland must certainly have been already covered with perpetual snows, with never-thawing ice, just as it is now." She continues:

> Everything tends to show that the land of the short nights and the long days was Norway or Scandinavia, *beyond* which was the blessed land of eternal light and summer; and to know of this, their tradition must have descended to the Greeks from some people more ancient than themselves, who were acquainted with those climatic details of which the Greeks themselves could know nothing. (*S.D.* II, 12.)

Heaven Became Hell

Whereas anthropologists, as shown, have no idea where the men who inhabited the Arctic region came from, H.P.B. asserts: "The Lemurians gravitated toward the North Pole, or the Heaven of their Progenitors (the Hyperborean Continent); the Atlanteans, toward the Southern Pole." (*S.D.* II, 274.) And finally:

> The secret books inform us that *the climate has changed in those regions more than once* since the first men inhabited those now almost inaccessible latitudes. They were a paradise before they became hell. . . . It is those early mysterious peoples, their countries (which have now become uninhabitable), as well as the name given to man both dead and alive, which have furnished an opportunity to the ignorant Church fathers for inventing a hell, which they have transformed into a burning instead of a freezing locality. (*S.D.* II, 773-4.)

New Alliance Suggested

In the preface to his book, *Immortality: The Scientific Evidence,* Alson J. Smith states: "Roman civilization with its law and learning was married in the Church to the savage power and moral strength of barbarism. The issue of that marriage was Western civilization. . . . It

is time for another marriage—this time between religious experience and the scientific method. The issue of such a marriage, I believe, will be a revived Church and new hope for all mankind."

SCIENCE THE ULTIMATE AUTHORITY

It is clearly Mr. Smith's opinion that religion cannot go forward without the green light from science:

> The survival of some part of the human spirit, or personality, beyond the grave had been felt as an intuitive truth by men since the beginning of time. Philosophically, such survival was logical. Theology made it a tenet of religious faith. . . . The history, the folklore, the literature, the music, the art, and the religion of the race provided a rich depository of alleged overcomings of the barrier that men called death.
>
> All this was enough for the mind of man up to and through the medieval period. He accepted the authority of religion and the logic of philosophy, which assured him that what he felt intuitively was indeed true. . . . [but today] the survival of the human personality beyond the grave will never be accepted—with that kind of acceptance that *means* something, that changes life—until science accepts it. This is unfortunate, perhaps, even unfair. But it is true. Even the Church will not do more than give lip-service to the idea of immortality until science sets its seal upon it.

IMMORTALITY LIFTS ITS HEAD

For a long time, Mr. Smith says, it was scarcely respectable to discuss immortality in intellectual or scientific circles. But when Einstein came up with his Theory of Relativity, he said, all that was changed:

> What Einstein did was to shatter the untouchability of time as a scientific problem and bring it down from its lofty perch to where it could be examined. He made discussions of a fourth dimension (and perhaps other dimensions as well) intellectually respectable. And, as indicated, he paved the way for scientific research on the time frontier by severing the leash that limited the area of science's investigations. Science, because of his Theory of Relativity, is now free to tackle the problems of time as well as those of space, and to recognize the fact that the problems of space and time are related and may even turn out to be one. Einstein, indeed, holds that indubitably they are one, that space and time are only somewhat different aspects of the same basic reality.

All this, says Mr. Smith, permits the discussion of immortality as a *scientific* possibility.

Parapsychology to the Rescue

Mr. Smith discusses "experiments in time," clairvoyance, precognition, prophetic visions, etc., as lending scientific credence to the intuitive belief in immortality. He further aserts:

> The immortality of the spiritual component, the individual human soul, is the inevitable corollary of a belief in God, no matter by what route we come to that belief. When Dr. J. B. Rhine made his memorable statement in Town Hall that "The soul theory has been confirmed," he followed it with another statement: "In a similar speculative way, we can now at least rationally conceive of the existence of a universal spirit equivalent to the modern conception of God."

A Parthian Shot

Lest, perhaps, he be accused of a too parochial point of view, Mr. Smith gives a barely perceptible nod to Hinduism and Buddhism in his last chapter. Whether congenital inability to understand the profundities of Eastern philosophy or a positive intent to prejudice the "Christian" reader was responsible for his choice of illustrations, it is, of course, impossible to say. For example:

> Hinduism extended the idea of reincarnation to every form of life and made it a doctrine of unrelieved darkness. The fly you brush away, the insect you crush beneath your foot, even the tiny flea on the fly, may be reincarnations of ancestors of yours, doing penace for sins committed in some previous incarnation. This endless round of birth and rebirth is only broken by withdrawing from the material world and concentrating thought on the Absolute, on God. Life is a penalty, the whole material world is evil and an illusion, and the only salvation comes through self-abnegation and the achievement of a mystical unity with God. Buddhism carried the pessimistic doctrine one step further by teaching that even the idea of oneness with the Absolute was an illusion and that the man who would be delivered from the dreary round of incarnation must overcome even his desire to be one with God.

All's Right in God's Heaven

To anyone who realizes the implications of reincarnation, with untold possibilities for soul-growth during each life, and who views with abhorrence the stagnation of the ordinary Christian conception of immortality, the following paragraphs appear ridiculous:

> To the Christian, life was a challenge because in it one would know God and be reunited with all one's earth-friends. In the early Church

> this faith in immortality was so strong that the Church fathers had to pass stern laws against the seeking of martyrdom. . . . Suffice it to say that it is in Christianity, with its Hebrew base and Platonic overtones, that we find the fullest, strongest, and most poignant expression of man's intuitive longing for a life beyond the grave.

Q.E.D.

The evidence brought forward in *Immortality* is supposed to establish beyond any reasonable doubt that science supports the idea of immortality. In Mr. Smith's words:

> We have seen how science has become steadily less and less materialistic in its evaluation of life and how the idea of God, once considered intolerable and even ridiculous by science, is now increasingly accepted as the most probable hypothesis for the existence of the cosmos and its life. And finally, in the newest branch of science, parapsychology, we have heard the most modern, the most advanced of the nuclear psychologists affirming, on the basis of laboratory experiment and clinical demonstration, that "the soul theory has been confirmed," and that "we can now conceive of God as a rational hypothesis." And finally, we have seen that the inevitable corollary of the idea of God is the idea of the immortality of the individual soul. (!!)

CONSCIOUS IMMORTALITY

The contrast between the Christian concept of an unearned immortality and the theosophical idea of growth toward immortality may be seen in the following:

> The evolution of *conscious* immortality is gradual, like all natural growths. It comes by self-conversion of personality into that which is higher, by the transmutation of personal energy into the one abiding power of all-embracing compassion for the whole of humanity. And when that conversion is complete, there is no more darkness, no more blundering, no more wondering as to the hereafter. The lower has merged into the higher. Memory becomes unbroken and eternal. (THEOSOPHY 15:273.)

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